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LETTER DATED 16 APRIL 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

In accordance with instructions I have received, I would like to request you to circulate the text of the enclosed appeal to the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin, issued by the Milli Majlis (Parliament) of Azerbaijan on 4 April 1997 as a document of the Security Council (see annex).

(Signed) Eldar G. KOULIEV
Permanent Representative

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Annex

[Original: Russian]

APPEAL TO B. N. YELTSIN, PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, FROM THE MILLI MAJLIS (PARLIAMENT) OF THE AZERBAIJANI REPUBLIC

(adopted by the Milli Majlis (Parliament) of Azerbaijan at its meeting on 4 April 1997)

On 4 March 1997, the Milli Majlis (Parliament) of the Azerbaijani Republic adopted an appeal to the State Duma of the Russian Federation and to the Parliaments of all States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States concerning illegal arms transfers from Russia to Armenia.

In this context, the President of the Azerbaijani Republic, Heydar Aliyev and the Milli Majlis (Parliament) of Azerbaijan, at its meeting on 14 March 1997 appealed to you concerning illegal transfers of military equipment from Russia to Armenia. Other authorities of the Azerbaijani Republic and numerous representatives of Azerbaijani society, including representatives of the Russian community who consider Azerbaijan to be their country, also appealed to various State bodies and key figures of the Russian Federation calling for an investigation into the above-mentioned facts.

From these appeals it emerges that arms transfers from the Russian Federation to Armenia are taking place regularly, that Armenian military personnel are being trained in the Russian Federation and that arms and military equipment are widely deployed in that part of Azerbaijani territory which is occupied by Armenia. According to reliable sources to which Azerbaijan has access, Armenia has missiles with a range of up to 300 kilometres, capable of carrying nuclear warheads. These missiles can annihilate any town in Azerbaijan or other countries in the region.

Although these facts have been confirmed by the information media of various countries, including those of the Russian Federation, and by meetings of the Duma of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Armenia and the political circles which support it as well as certain high-ranking figures of the Russian Federation claim that these allegations are totally without foundation.

Nevertheless, according to information communicated to the media in Russia, at a meeting of the Duma held on 2 April 1997 it was stated officially that between 1993 and 1996 large quantities of weapons and modern military equipment were transferred to Armenia: R-17 missile launchers; Kroug and Osa missile systems; T-72 and BMP-2 tanks; D-39, D-20 and D-1 howitzers; Grad rocket launchers and Igla missile systems. Moreover the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation delivered huge quantities of mortars, automatic weapons, machine guns, handguns, rocket launchers, anti-tank guided missiles and munitions to Armenia. The total cost of the military material transferred without intermediary amounts to approximately one billion United States dollars.

The analysis of the above-mentioned facts demonstrates, once again, that the Republic of Armenia, which claims to be seeking a peaceful settlement of the

conflict in Upper Karabakh, in fact has not abandoned its aims of conquest and continues secretly to arm itself illegally, intensifying its policy of aggression against the Azerbaijani Republic. Under these circumstances, transfers of Russian arms to the aggressor raise serious doubts among the Azerbaijani population as to the sincerity of Russia's policy in the Caucasus.

Unilaterally arming the aggressor is likely to create an explosive situation and trigger a wide-scale war, not only in Transcaucasia, but over a broader territory that includes Russia. By deliberately arming one State of the Commonwealth of Independent States - Armenia - against another - Azerbaijan - Russia may well incite Armenia to commit further acts of aggression. History has shown time and again that encouraging and unilaterally arming an aggressor is fraught with dangerous and unfortunate consequences. One assumes, however, that the lessons of history do not escape Russian politicians. The fact that the deliveries of arms and military equipment to Armenia are taking place at the precise moment when influential international organizations and great Powers - notably Russia - are endeavouring to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and that a cease-fire is in place is particularly troubling. The situation which has been created demonstrates that a peaceful settlement to the conflict is not to the liking of Armenia and certain influential circles in Russia.

The Milli Majlis of the Azerbaijani Republic has again declared that the deliveries of military equipment from Russia to Armenia are quite simply a violation of the provisions of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and that they alter the military balance in the region in favour of Armenia, which may seriously compromise the peaceful settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the basis of the universally recognized principles of international law.

The Milli Majlis of the Azerbaijani Republic expresses its profound gratitude to Mr. Lev Rokhline and to all deputies of the State Duma of the Russian Federation who adopted an objective position on this question and hopes that the Russian authorities will put a stop to such incidents, which threaten to jeopardize the traditional relations of friendship between Azerbaijan and Russia.

The Milli Majlis of the Azerbaijani Republic notes with concern that the illegal deliveries of arms from Russia to Armenia, which are highly prejudicial to the authority of the Russian Federation in Azerbaijan and in the region, cause the population to harbour serious doubts about the action taken by Russia in its capacity as co-chairman of the Minsk Group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which is responsible for settling the conflicts of Upper Karabakh.

The Milli Majlis of the Azerbaijani Republic urges you to use your influence to ensure that an investigation is conducted as soon as possible under the supervision of the Procurator-General of the Russian Federation, Y. I. Skouratov, into the question of illegal Russian arms deliveries to Armenia, that the guilty parties are severely punished and that the arms, munitions and military equipment are all returned to Russia under the supervision of international observers.